

The President's Weekly Address

July 4, 2013

Hi, everybody. I hope you all had a safe and happy Fourth of July filled with parades and cookouts, fireworks, and family reunions.

We celebrated at the White House with a few hundred members of the military and their families. And we took a moment amid the festivities to remember what our Independence Day is all about: what happened 237 years ago and what it meant to the world.

On July 4, 1776, a small band of patriots declared that we were a people created equal, free to think and worship and live as we please. It was a declaration heard around the world: that we were no longer colonists, we were Americans, and our destiny would not be determined for us, it would be determined by us.

It was a bold and tremendously brave thing to do. It was also nearly unthinkable. At the time, kings and princes and emperors ruled the world. But those patriots were certain that a better way was possible. And to achieve it, to win their freedom, they were willing to lay it all on the line: their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor. They fought a revolution. Few would have bet on their side to win, but for the first of many times to come, America proved the doubters wrong.

And now, 237 years later, the United States—this improbable Nation—is the greatest in the world: a land of liberty and opportunity, a global defender of peace and freedom, a beacon of hope to people everywhere who cherish those ideals. Generations of Americans made our country what it is today—farmers and teachers, engineers and laborers, entrepreneurs and elected leaders—people from all walks of life, from all parts of the world, all pulling in the same direction.

And now we, the people, must make their task our own: to live up to the words of that Declaration of Independence and secure liberty and opportunity for our own children and for future generations.

I want to say a special word of thanks to the men and women of our military, who have played such a vital role in the story of our Nation. You have defended us at home and abroad. And you fought on our Nation's behalf to make the world a better, safer place. People in scattered corners of the world are living in peace today, free to write their own futures, because of you. We are grateful for your service and your sacrifice, especially those still serving in harm's way and your families here at home.

So God bless you all, and may God bless the United States of America.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:05 p.m. on July 3 in the East Room at the White House for broadcast on July 4. The transcript was made available

by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 3, but was embargoed for release until 6 a.m. on July 4.

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